

There Is No Royal
Road Except
to Failure

Herbert Kaufman's Weekly Page

Despondency Is the
Malaria of
Inaction

The Stubborn Partner

By HERBERT KAUFMAN

You were born under the sign of *Taurus*, the Bull, and therefore destined for an *ill starred* career. Any astrologer who assures you to the *contrary*, has jumbled his planets.

Success is only for open minded, *reasonable* men. You *won't* be taught, you *can't* be fought, so you must *finally* fail.

If any *one* fact outstands all others, in this *kaleidoscopic* period, it is the necessity for constant *revision* of *policies* and *procedures*.

No individual or institution is on a *sound* basis without the *adoption* and *adaptation* of the *last* efficiency.

Yesterday is an *attic* filled with a *wasteful* paraphernalia.

Nobody *continues* to know *all* the best ways to accomplish *anything*.

Factory floors of equipment are at the mercy of *improvement*. Progress is a *wrecking* sledge as well as a *building* hammer.

Competition is so *avid* and *regardless* of *replacement* costs that a concern can't *survive* with *old-fangled* methods.

You oppose a *solitary* judgment against the *sum-total* of *contemporary* experiences.

No argument can invalidate your *arbitrary* convictions.

You're an *unruly* brake on promotive enterprise—a *pig-headed* and *intractable* bigot.

Logic does not *penetrate* your *self-esteem*. You cannot conceive yourself *wrong*.

Having *delivered* an *opinion*, you constitute yourself the *supreme court*—the *case* is *closed*—a *dissenting* majority *notwithstanding*.

Your type *delayed* advancement through *centuries* that might *otherwise* have realized *most* of the betterments which characterize *Now*.

You're a conceited, bumptious pest, an arrogant *egotist*, obsessed with a *peculiar* form of *madness*; you *must* have *your* way; even *personal interest* cannot argue against the ridiculous form of *selfishness* which prefers to *assert* power, if only to *thwart* the *propositions* which do not *originate* with you.

You're the man whose firm *could* have grown to *national influence*, if you hadn't set your mind against *advertising*.

You're the man whose plant would cover *fifty acres* today, if you had not *held out* against its *reorganization* for *automobile* production.

You're the man who drove the *best* employes of the house to set up for *themselves* and take the *cream* of your trade, because you *refused* to *yield* to your *partners'* advice when they desired to *recognize* their *services* with a *minority interest*.

You're the man who *delayed* the *installation* of *automatic devices* until you lost *half* your customers through *fixed* overheads that kept costs *too high* to meet *current* prices.

You're the man who won't *give in*, so you must *give up*.

You're responsible for the steady growth of *corporations*.

Hold backs, kickers, blockaders and idea knockers are impotent where *board management* prevails. We're getting along much more *rapidly* since business has *awakened* to this solution of a long persisting nuisance—the "*I-know-bests*."

Of course you won't recognize any *likeness* in this *portrait*—it doesn't *at all* resemble the picture that *vanity* painted.

That's because you don't indulge in *self-analysis*. If you *did* there might be *hope* for you.

But every *stubborn* man is quite *certain* that his chief *draw-back* is his *principal asset*—you're *proud* of the quality which you *confuse* with *determination*.

You'll *never* understand. There's a *bandage* over your *ears* and *eyes*.

The *ostrich* and you share the *same* habit—both *deliberately* shut yourselves off from *protective information* when you *most* need it.

Trapped

THERE goes the ambulance again—no mistaking that clang—every woman in the slums knows the ominous bell.

Thank God it went on—the block is still immune! But tomorrow, Death may strike nearer. It's all in the hands of Providence. What use to struggle?

Her children can't escape. The streets are full of danger, but with the thermometer around blood heat and pots cooking and clothes boiling in the stuffy tenement rooms, she can't hold them in-doors.

(Why don't they repair the dumb-waiter and take that can of garbage down? The landlord promised to fix the toilet a week ago and still no plumber—)

Just over yonder, beyond the chimney stacks, there are open spaces, clean, green fields, trees and sea. No plague there. If she could only take them there until the danger passed.

But why waste time on impossible hopes; her man is lucky to have his job, at least they're sure of rent and grocery bills.

Living is so high nowadays that dollars shrink as fast as wages increase. How can folks get far enough ahead to move into better neighborhoods and afford vacations?

One hundred and forty-eight new cases yesterday and no sign of let up.

They say the doctors have no cure for it and those who die are best off.

If one avoids the infected districts there's little danger—if—if—IF—IF—

Peoples Learn Kindness Last

IGNORANCE is a cross-builder and faggot-lighter. Cruelty, persecution, prejudice are manifestations of unenlightenment. There is no humanity among Yahoos. Knowledge is gentle and tolerant. Brutality disappears before education.

Peoples learn kindness last. We became effective, then philanthropic. Hospitals, asylums and sanitariums are final stages of development. To promote intelligence is to erase need and suffering. Civilization is the expression of hearts as well as brains.

A Snubbed Opportunity

CHINA is an old beggar sitting hungry on a treasure chest.

Venial administration, dearth of leadership and vassalage to Manchu reactionaries, combined to reduce the nation to an inferior estate until spirit and ambition seem to have petered out.

Here we have the amazing spectacle of four hundred million persons utterly bankrupt in finance and resource, yet individually competent, willing to work as hard as ever humans labored, apt-fingered, reliable and thrifty—occupying probably the richest territory on the map, lacking only organization to place them upon an independent basis—to transform their land into a realm of factories, to change the empire into an artificer of modern products and quite possibly a universal lender.

It is certain that some power will very soon foster this development which will entail the purchase of equipment amounting to billions of dollars and create an enormous market for various classes of merchandise the local manufacture of which will be deferred for a considerable number of years.

Granted that the per capita buying power of the population will be limited by ridiculously low wages, still the quantity of stuff which this horde can consume, even in pennies-worth, is staggering.

The slight insight that we have gained in European methods of fostering export trade, is sufficient to make every thinking American whistle in wonderment at the decision of our bankers in rejecting China's recent application for a \$25,000,000 loan.

A decade from now, when the Continent has rehabilitated its commerce and our merchants, with appalling surpluses on hand, are skinning their knuckles against closed doors in various quarters of the globe, we'll whistle louder and more disgustedly.

It would appear that China enjoys no monopoly in overlooking opportunities. There's a streak of yellow in Wall Street, too.

When Caution Is a Pickpocket

GUARANTEED investments yield minimum incomes. Certainties are penny earners. A timorous dollar seldom grows larger. Its earnings are absorbed by the rising cost of living.

More vessels are wrecked close to shore than in mid-ocean. Those who venture least lose most. Profits abound where risks are found. Cowards stand no show at anything. A degree of daring is requisite in all successful operations. Those who wait until innovations are reduced to exactness never share in the advantages which accrue to the inaugurators.

Excessive caution is a pickpocket.

VERSES
by Herbert Kaufman

**Vim
Vigor
Victory**

IT'S half-past Try-o'clock. Get out
Into the world and look about.
Year after year—day after day—
That clock of yours has leaked
away.
It won't be long before you're
gray.
Once you have entered middle
age
It's twice as hard to change your
gauge.
Don't wait until your vigor dies:
This is the time for enterprise.
False starts can be corrected when
We're young and agile, but the men
Who never trained their hopes to
take
Fresh courage, when they lose
one stake
Are not prepared to face the fears
And doubts that crowd the after
years.

As Old Cyrus Simmons Would Say:

Progress and honesty hang around the same neighborhoods. The Moroccans admire clever thieves and glib liars—but then look at Morocco.

So long as I keep searching for my own weaknesses, nobody will find them sooner and take advantage of 'em.

If you don't fall down occasionally, I'll know that you are not trying to get up. The fielder with no muffs to his record has usually been side-stepping the hard chances.

Think more about the high cost of loafing and you won't have to bother about the high cost of living.

I may doubt your ability, but that won't count, if you don't.

All the errors and mistakes you're hiding will finally reach my eye. The clock and the balance sheet catch what I miss.

Any pitcher that leaks a drop will leak a quart. Men who neglect little responsibilities will overlook big ones.

There's a better man behind an honorable failure than the one behind a dishonorable success.

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